

XI. *Abstract of a Letter from Stephen De Visme, Esq; at Canton, in China, to Henry Baker, F. R. S. containing an Account of an Earthquake at Macao, and a short Description of a singular Species of Monkeys without Tails, found in the interior Part of Bengal. Communicated by Mr. Baker.*

Canton, January 7, 1768.

DEAR SIR,

Read March 9,
1769.

THE following account of an earthquake, at Macao, was sent me by a friend at that place, in a letter, dated November 23, 1767. His words are: “ Last night, at 50
“ minutes after nine o’clock, we were all surprized
“ with a heavy shock of an earthquake, which continued above a minute. This shock was so great
“ that the house rocked, and I was afraid we were all
“ going down into the bowels of the earth. Another
“ shock we felt five minutes after eleven o’clock, but
“ not so great: and at three this morning another
“ pretty great. In all we have had five shocks, but
“ the first the greatest. It came with a rolling, and
“ a dreadful noise in the air; so that at first some
“ people

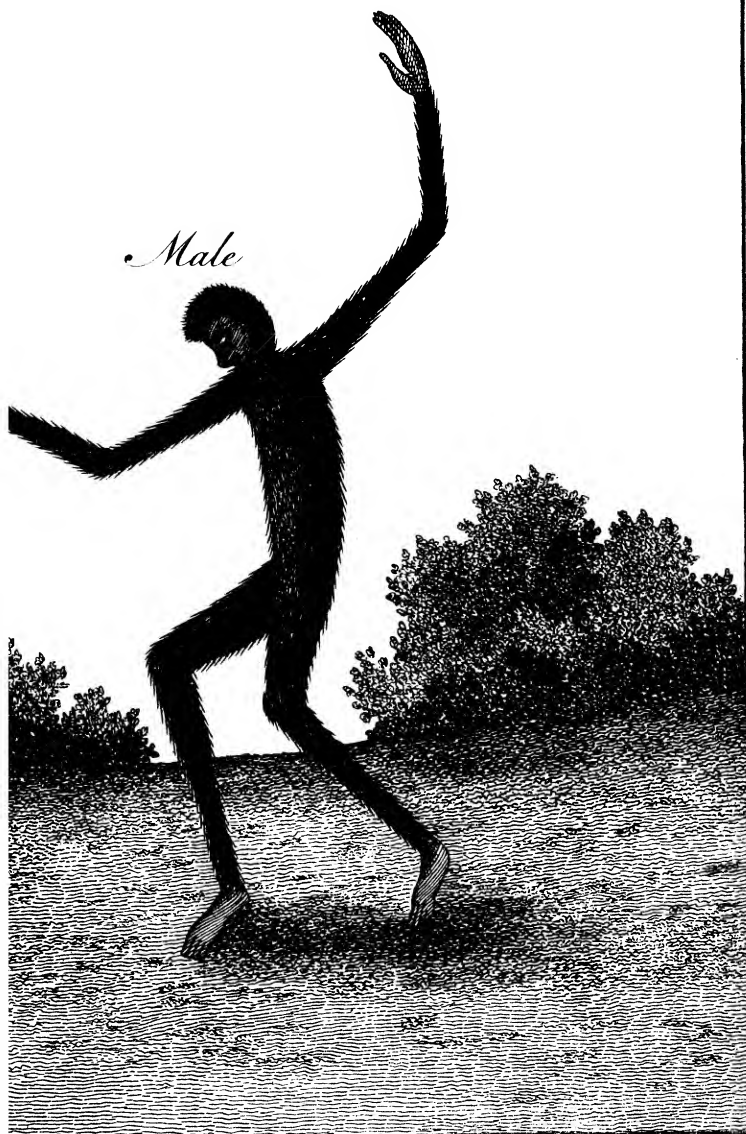
“ people thought it to be the firing of guns, or thunder at some distance. At the first shock I could hardly hold my feet; but, thank God, no bad accident has happened; and I hope the Almighty will deliver us from any more of these frightful shocks. I was up almost the whole night. The wind was northerly, but faint, and it was sultry hot; the sky close and cloudy, and not a star to be seen. The oldest people here say, they never remember to have felt so violent a shock, and of so long continuance. The ships in the harbour shook and whirled about, and those on board imagined at first that it had been a whirlwind.”——

At Manilla earthquakes are often very violent, so as to overturn steeples, houses, and other buildings; and I observed, when I was there, that, to prevent such accidents, their timbers in building are placed in a very particular manner; they have no Attic story, only ware-houses, and one floor over them.

Perhaps the drawing, which I now send you, of a singular sort of Monkies, male and female, may not prove unacceptable. These animals are called Golok, or wild people, and are thought to be originally a mixture with the human kind, having no tails. They come out of the forests in the interior part of Bengal, from the country called Mevat. They inhabit the woods: their food is fruit, leaves, bark of trees, and milk: flesh only when caught. They are very gentle, and extremely modest. They are of the height of a man; their teeth are as white as pearls; their legs and arms are in due proportion to their body, which is very genteel. Some of them
were

Female





were brought to Decca ; and what I now send you is a copy of the original drawing *. See TAB. III.

I remain, dear Sir,

Your affectionate

humble servant,

Stephen De Visme.

* The monkey, of which Mr. De Visme has sent this drawing and short account, seems to be very like, if not the same with the ape without a tail, described by Mr. De Buffon in the XIVth volume of the *Histoire Naturelle*, p. 92, under the name of the Gibbon, which it bears in some parts of the East-Indies. This species is found, he says, along the coast of Coromandel, at Malacca, on the Molucca islands, and upon the confines of China. It grows to be upwards of four feet, walks on its hind legs, and sometimes on all four. The hair, with which it is covered, is either brown or black : round about its face is a circle of greyish hairs ; its eyes are large, but sunk in its head ; its ears naked ; its face flat, and of a copper colour. It is of a placid disposition ; its motions are gentle ; it was fed with bread, fruits, almonds. But the most singular characteristic is, the great length of its arms ; and though Mr. De Visme takes no notice of this circumstance in his description, his drawing seems to indicate it ; but in a less striking manner than that of Mr. De Buffon, who adds, that, when the animal is upright, it can touch the ground with its hands.

M. M.

